



Department
for Education

Associate Commercial Practitioner – Category Officer

Closing date: 21 March 2019

Department for Education

Business Area: Commercial Directorate, Operations Group

Grade: HEO

Salary: £28,655 - 31,464 HEO National

Working pattern: Flexible working, Full-time, Job share, Part-time

Contract type: Permanent

Number of posts: 3

Hours: 37

Location:

Sheffield, Darlington, Manchester, Coventry

About the job:

What are we looking for?

DfE commercial is currently undergoing a huge expansion and there are opportunities for those with the right attitude and skillset. We are looking for people who are hard-working, keen and have the desire to begin a career in procurement and category management. The role is as challenging as it is rewarding. If that sounds like you, read below to learn more about the role.

Who we are?

At the Department for Education, we're responsible for providing children and young people with the lifelong learning they deserve. It's a passion that's fuelling positive change as we aim to build a world-class commercial directorate and enhance our workforce with fresh talent. With a commercial category spend of £6.4bn, we're working on complex, high-value contracts that will create tangible results for schools, colleges, universities and young people across the country. Perhaps you'll have the skills and ambition we need to join us.

Commercial Directorate

- The purpose of the commercial function within the Department for Education is to ensure that all commercial and procurement activity supports the Department's priorities and delivers outstanding value for money. It also exists to proactively develop commercial solutions for the wider education sector that reduce waste in procurement and release funds for the front line.
- The commercial function manages a large and diverse set of activities across the department with many high profile and complex contracts and grants as well as



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running a highly successful Risk Protection Arrangement for academies and a schools buying strategy.

- Commercial Directorate is currently engaged in an exciting growth and transformation programme, with the aim of becoming one of the best commercial teams in Government.

Where do you fit in?

It's an exciting time to join commercial. We are currently expanding rapidly as part of our transformation programme and we are looking for new category officers to join the team.

The right candidate will be expected to pick up things quickly and hit the ground running. You will need strong analytical skills, be able to manage multiple stakeholders, and have project management experience. Most importantly you will need to be an independent thinker, be able to manage your time effectively, be proactive in solving problems and coming up with new ideas and be confident in working under your own direction.

In this role you will support the commercial provision of goods and services providing expert advice on how to enable the DfE to make sound procurement decisions, that will both be cost effective and provide a great service to our users.

You will work directly with the business and with suppliers, coming across unique challenges as you procure goods and services. The key to this will be building strategic relationships and leveraging your influencing and analysis skills to identify and deliver the best commercial outcomes. This will be a testing role that will require you to use your whole skillset. If you think you have the right skills for the role, apply below.

Key Responsibilities:

- Deliver multiple commercial activities simultaneously with responsibility for all aspects of the lifecycle including pre-market engagement, contract award and management.
- Oversee the preparation of tender documentation and evaluation guidance and oversee procurements to ensure high quality outcomes.
- Deliver the role in line with department service level agreements and processes, central policy and current legislation.
- Ensure accurate management of the contract award and decline processes.
- Identify operational and process problems and ensure all risks and issues are resolved in a timely manner.
- Support the customer in following good practice from the start of the contracts.
- Seek out and implement all opportunities to remove waste in delivering value for money to customers.
- Work with customers and suppliers managing the relationship and ensuring pipeline requirements and corporate targets are met.

Essential Criteria:

- Experience of building and managing relationships with customers and internal stakeholders.
- Experience of project management in a pressured environment to manage the delivery of multiple competing activities, identifying and resolving potential delivery conflicts in advance.



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- Evidence of communicating complex information and concepts clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.

The right person for the role will not necessarily have commercial experience but will have the right transferable skills and the desire for a career in commercial.

Additional Info:

This is an exciting time to join the Commercial Directorate at the Department for Education, with lots of great opportunities for staff at all levels to develop and progress. This role forms part of a large recruitment drive to transition the delivery of commercial activity to a category management model. If you want a new challenge and to be part of a supportive and innovative team, we want to hear from you.

To find out more about our ambition and the opportunities we are creating, visit www.makingcommercialmatterdfe.co.uk

The role will involve regular travel to other DfE sites.

Benefits:

As a member of the DfE, you will be entitled to join the highly competitive Civil Service Pension Scheme, which many experts agree is one of the most generous in the UK.

You will have 25 days leave, increasing by 1 day every year to a maximum of 30 days after five years' service. In addition, all staff receive the Queen's Birthday privilege holiday and 8 days' bank and public holidays.

We offer flexible working arrangements, such as job sharing, term-time working, flexi-time and compressed hours, along with excellent childcare benefits.

As an organisation that exists to support education and lifelong learning, we offer our staff excellent professional development opportunities including 5 paid days per year for learning activities.

You will also have access to an employee discounts scheme covering healthcare, retail, and recreational activities.

Applicants currently holding a permanent post in the Civil Service should note that, if successful, their salary on appointment would be determined by the Department's transfer / promotion policies.

To find out more about the benefits of becoming a member of the DfE, visit www.makingcommercialmatterdfe.co.uk

Allowances:

This post may attract a procurement allowance of £1,500 per annum for successful applicants holding the CIPS qualifications.

Successful candidates will need to supply evidence of CIPS qualifications in order to receive the allowance once in post.

Alternatively, the successful candidate will need to complete their study to achieve the qualification within an agreed reasonable timeframe.



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Things you need to know:

Security

Successful candidates must pass basic security checks.

Nationality statement

Candidates will be subject to UK immigration requirements as well as Civil Service nationality rules.

If you're applying for a role requiring security clearance please be aware that foreign or dual nationality is not an automatic bar. However certain posts may have restrictions which could affect those who do not have sole British nationality or who have personal connections with certain countries outside the UK.

Nationality requirements

Open to UK, Commonwealth and European Economic Area (EEA) and certain non EEA nationals. Further information on whether you are able to apply is available [here](#).

Eligibility

Candidates in their probationary period are eligible to apply for vacancies within this department.

Working for the Civil Service

The Civil Service Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of civil servants. We recruit by merit on the basis of fair and open competition, as outlined in the Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles. The Civil Service embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity. There is a guaranteed interview scheme (GIS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

Terms & Conditions

Please see attachment below for the DfE's terms & conditions.

Selection Process Details:

This vacancy is using [Success Profiles](#) and will assess you on Behaviours and Strengths.

Stage 1 – Application & Sift

As part of the application process, you will be asked to complete a CV and a personal statement.

Your CV should cover details of education and professional qualifications, employment history, as well as giving details of relevant skills and experience.

Your personal statement (maximum 1,000 words) should include details of how you meet the essential criteria as detailed in the job description and person specification, including examples of evidence.



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The first selection stage will be a sift of your CV and Personal Statement. You will be assessed based on your demonstration of the essential criteria for this role.

Stage 2 - Interview

Candidates that successfully pass the sift will be invited to interview. At interview, you will be assessed using the following Success Profile Behaviours:

- Making Effective Decisions
- Delivering at Pace
- Working Together

In addition, we will assess you against the following Strengths:

- Managing a quality service

In cases where there are a high number of applications the sift pass mark may be adjusted and candidates will be invited to interview in merit order, i.e. those scoring the highest.

For more information on how to develop a CV and personal statement, please refer to the Candidate Pack attached.

Feedback will only be provided for candidates who reach the interview stage.

Sift/Interview dates and location:

Sift scheduled: end March

Interviews scheduled: mid-April

Interview Location: Manchester, Sheffield, Darlington and Coventry

Whilst we will endeavour to meet the dates set out in the advert there may be occasions when these dates will change. Those candidates invited to assessment will be provided with sufficient notice of confirmed dates.

Apply and further information:

Contact point for applicants

For further information on this vacancy please email: dfе@penna.com or call 0800 049 6798

Further information

For more information regarding our roles, please visit our website at www.makingcommercialmatter.co.uk

A reserve list may be held for a period of 12 months from which further appointments can be made.

Applicants who are successful at interview will be, as part of pre-employment screening subject to a check on the Internal Fraud Database (IFD). This check will provide information about employees who have been dismissed for fraud or dishonesty offences. This check also applies to employees who resign or otherwise leave before being dismissed for fraud or dishonesty had their employment continued. Any applicant's details held on the IFD will be refused employment.



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Terms and conditions of candidates transferring from ALBs and NDPBs;

1. Bodies that are not accredited by the Civil Service Commission and are not able to advertise on Civil Service jobs will be treated as external new starters and will come into DfE on modernised terms and conditions with a salary at the band minimum.
2. Bodies that are accredited by the Civil Service Commission but do not have civil service status will be offered modernised terms and will not have continuous service recognised for leave or sickness benefits. Salaries will be offered at band minima, but there is some flexibility where this would cause a detriment to the individual.
3. Bodies that are accredited by the Civil Service Commission and do have Civil Service status will be treated as OGD transfers. Staff appointed on lateral transfer will move on to pre-modernised DfE terms and staff appointed on promotion will move on to modernised DfE terms. Salaries will transfer over, but be capped at the DfE band maximum.

Reasonable adjustment

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes.

If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should:

- Contact Government Recruitment Service via dferecruitment.grs@cabinetoffice.gov.uk soon as possible before the closing date to discuss your needs
- Complete the “Assistance required” section in the “Additional requirements” page of your application form to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process. For instance, you may need wheelchair access at interview, or if you’re deaf, a Language Service Professional

DfE currently offer both a Salary Sacrifice and an enhanced “Salary Plus” childcare voucher scheme to support employees with childcare costs. “Salary Plus” will be open to employees who join DfE prior to 2 May 2018, but will close to new entrants who haven’t made an application to the scheme by this date. Salary sacrifice will be open to staff until October 2018. Any move across the Civil Service on or after October 2018 may have implications on an employee’s ability to carry on claiming childcare vouchers.

The Department for Education’s recruitment processes are underpinned by the Civil Service Commissioner’s Recruitment Principles, which outlines that selection for appointment is made on merit based on fair and open competition. If you feel your application has not been treated in accordance with the values in the Civil Service Code and/or if you feel the recruitment has been conducted in such a way that conflicts with the Civil Service Commissioner’s Recruitment Principles, you may make a complaint, by contacting the Central Recruitment Team at the following address CentralRecruitment.Operations@education.gov.uk If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint you have the right to complain to the Civil Service Commissioners.

Department for Education do not cover the cost of travel to your interview/assessment unless otherwise stated.

For more information regarding our roles, please visit our website at www.makingcommercialmatter.co.uk